

19 JUN 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Travel Arrangements in the Department of State

1. As one aspect of my current survey of travel authorities and procedures affecting the Office of Personnel, I met with Mr. Mansfield, Chief, Transportation Section of the Department, to review some of their arrangements and experiences which would have relevance to our own problems.

2. The following summarizes our discussion: It should be noted that several of my questions related to matters which are handled by the personnel offices in the regional bureaus rather than the Transportation Section. Accordingly, some of his replies require further checking and for this purpose I will meet next week with Mr. Robert Heinemeyer, Chief of Personnel of the Washington Office.

a. Question: Who is the approving authority within the Department for travel involving returns short of tour, advance return of dependents, home leave, reassignments, health reasons and death?

Answer: Most authorizations for travel of the types indicated above are granted by the personnel offices of the geographic bureaus. In health cases, the Medical Office reviews the field request and notifies the appropriate personnel office of its disposition. Reassignment cases and home leave requests involving reassignment from the current post are decided by panel action and the personnel office concerned cuts the travel order in accordance with the decision made.

b. Question: If you return an employee to the United States in the Department's interests, do you proceed against him for any monies advanced, if it is determined that the return is for cause?

Answer: If an employee is brought back and is not separated for cause, he is not charged for travel costs incurred (3 FAM Section 782).

c. Questions: Do you permit employees to change their place of residence (for purposes of home leave or return to the United States following separation or retirement abroad) at any time prior to departure from overseas? Do employees have to designate their place of residence prior to going overseas?

Answer: Employees are required to complete a residence and dependency report at the time they depart for overseas or change their residence or change their dependency status. Any change of residence while overseas requires a review by the appropriate personnel office or the mid-career office, if applicable. Thus, employees have the option of indicating any place in the United States at the time of the original designation but changes are carefully reviewed and must be for some justifiable reason. Apparently, the system in practice prevents frequent and indiscriminate changes in employee designations of residence.

d. Question: What is the principal criterion for determining eligibility of home leave?


Answer: Home leave may be authorized when it is contemplated that an employee will return from overseas immediately after home leave or upon completion of an assignment in the United States (3 FAM 456). This contemplation is assumed in the Foreign Service. The United States assignment may be of indefinite duration and obviously is not affected by the fact that an employee may be assigned to different positions while in Washington.

e. Question: What is the principal criterion for authorizing the Home Service Transfer Allowance?

Answer: The grant is predicated upon the understanding certified by the Department and the employee that he will return to a foreign area upon the completion of his United States assignment. Administratively, the employee certifies his willingness on the application form and the Department's understanding of the employee's return overseas is evidenced on the form by the appropriate personnel office.

f. Question: Do you ever permit an employee to depart from home leave a few days or weeks ahead of the prescribed period of overseas service?

Answer: No.


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